

Planning Justification Statement

Site: 147, Osborne Road, Romford, RM11 1HG

Proposed Development: Single-Storey Rear Extension

1.0 The Site and Local Context

1.1 The site lies within the urban area of Romford wherein the proposed development is acceptable in principle. It is not subject to any form of special protective designation under planning policy or planning statute. In planning terms the application property is an 'ordinary' house in an 'ordinary' street.

1.2 The property is a three bedroom semi-detached house situated within a wholly residential built-frontage. The rear of the house is out of obvious public view.

2.0 The Proposed Development

2.1 Planning permission is sought for a single-storey rear extension. Bedroom numbers would remain at three.

3.0 Relevant Planning Policy

National Level: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

3.1 At paragraph 7 of the NPPF it states that: ***"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development..."*** It goes on at paragraph 11 to state that there should be a ***"... presumption in favour of sustainable development."*** It then states at paragraph 38 it that: ***"Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."***

3.2 The NPPF does not directly address matters of residential extension design or residential amenity but at section 12 it does set out some general, common-sense principles providing direction to achieving good design outcomes.

3.3 In the interests of sustainability the NPPF does not dictate minimum or maximum parking standards. It takes a more flexible and responsive approach in suggesting that provision can be determined on a site-by-site basis taking into account a range of factors that will vary according to any given locality.

Regional Level: The London Plan (2021)

3.4 As the overall strategic plan for London, this sets out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20–25 years. With regard to planning, the Local Plans of all London Boroughs must be in general conformity with the London Plan. It is comprised of many policies aimed at delivering the various objectives of these core themes. Those that potentially have some direct relevance to the proposed development have been acknowledged and accounted for, as far as is considered reasonably necessary and appropriate, in the conception and formulation of the scheme. These policies are listed below:

D3: *'Optimising Site Capacity through the Design led Approach'*

D4: *'Delivering Good Design'*

D5: *'Inclusive Design'*

D6: *'Housing Quality and Standards'*

T6.1: *'Residential Parking'*

Local Level: Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 (Adopted November 2021)

3.5 The following policies of the Local Plan are those most relevant to consideration of the planning merits of the proposed development. They have been acknowledged in its conception, with the objective being an acceptable degree of compliance as appropriate, in light of all other specific material considerations and circumstances pertaining:

7: *'Residential Design and Amenity'*

24: 'Parking Provision and Design'

26: 'Urban Design'

3.6 Adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) '*Residential Extensions and Alterations (2011)*', is used by the Council to inform the application of relevant policies of the Local Plan. It is not intended to provide absolute prescription. It is a suite of guiding principles by which to make empirical judgement as to the effects of proposed development, with the key issue being whether or not those effects would constitute *real* harm to or would simply amount to acceptable consequences of physical change. This framework of guidance should not be an unnecessary constraint. It should not prevent taking an all-encompassing view of a development proposal, the idiosyncrasies and particular qualities of a site and its wider setting and all other circumstances pertaining, and where appropriate, applying different weight to different factors as warranted, to then be able to correctly determine acceptability or otherwise. It should be used as 'guidelines not tramlines'. **NB:** This general point has previously been iterated with clarity, and in direct reference to the SPD, by a Planning Inspector who, in relation to planning application reference P1291.22 and appeal reference APP/B5480/D/22/3309806 for 142, Front Lane, Upminster, stated that ***"... it is important to recognise that such guidance does not constitute a 'black and white' set of rules to be applied rigidly or exclusively when other material considerations indicate that an exception may be appropriate."***

4.0 Design and General Planning Considerations

4.1 The philosophy that informs the proposed development is that of improving the functional quality of the site as a family living environment, creating an inherently attractive and architecturally satisfactory enlarged building whilst at the same time avoiding harm to the character and appearance of the wider locality or to nearby property occupiers. The proposed development has been positively conceived in all

aspects to accord with the various protection and other functional expectations of national policy guidance and adopted local policies and local guidance referred to in part three of this statement.

4.2 Taking into account relevant SPD referred to in paragraph 3.6 above, the proposed development would be an appropriate response to the design form and detailing of the host house and exhibit sufficient subordination and proportionality in relation to it.

4.3 The submitted plan shows the overall architectural composition of the enlarged house to remain true to the original intrinsic character. It would be well within the parameters of the familiar and expected in relation to the variety of size, scale and general design that make up the street-scene. External materials of construction would reference those used in the existing building and in the local built-environment. The overall size, appearance and character of the resulting enlarged building would clearly be seen to be just a variation on the theme of and a direct evolution of, the style of the existing building. It would be inherently attractive and would not harm public visual amenity.

4.4 On the matter of neighbour amenity, there would be no windows positioned within the proposed extension that would allow for overlooking and loss of privacy at any neighbouring properties.

4.5 In terms its physical presence and impact, the most fundamental facet of the proposed extension is that it would project by approximately 5.9 metres from the rear elevation of the house. This would be 1.9 metres longer than the 4 metres maximum cited in adopted SPD as being potentially acceptable directly on the common-boundary. However, in doing so it would not go beyond the end of the single-storey rear extension that has recently been completed at attached property

no.145. Therefore, regardless of not meeting the 4 metre rule, it would not be capable of having any adverse impact on the amenities of natural light and immediate outlook enjoyed by the occupants of that property.

4.6 With regard to unattached neighbouring property no.149, despite its overall length of 5.9 metres, the proposed extension would still only project by approximately 1.9 metres beyond the end of an existing single-storey rear extension at no.149. As a factor just on its own, this would not be such a significant differential as to be capable of having any adverse impact on the amenities of natural light and immediate outlook enjoyed by the occupants of that property. The fact that there would also be a separation gap of approximately 1.5 metres between the proposed extension and the existing extension at no.149 would provide further mitigation against the already inconsequential impact of the 1.9 metre differential.

4.7 The proposed development would not involve reducing or increasing the need for parking provision on the site. The expectations of policy 24: *'Parking Provision and Design of the Local Plan* would not be conflicted or prejudiced.

4.8 Private amenity-space would remain sufficient to serve the enlarged dwelling in accordance with relevant policy and standards. Waste/recycling bins would be storable adjacent to the front elevation of the house, as now. No trees or vegetation of high public amenity value would be adversely affected by the proposed development. There are no species of protected flora and fauna known or suspected to exist on the site. The position for the proposed extension(s) does not provide important wildlife habitat. The increased amount of development on the overall site by comparison with the existing would not cause a material intensification in the use of the site that would threaten the quality of such wildlife habitat as would remain available in the private amenity-space. There would be no conflict with policies or guidance relating to any of these issues.

5.0 Flood Risk Assessment

5.1 The application site lies within Environment Agency designated Flood Risk Zone 1 where little, if any, risk of flooding from any typical source (sea/rivers/reservoirs/ground-water/surface water), has been identified. No special ameliorative construction or protection measures would be necessary.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed development would not result in conflict with any aspect of the NPPF nor with the spirit and purpose of any relevant regional or local policies and SPD and no undermining of their intended objectives. There would be no actual harm external to policy and no harm to policy itself and no harm to any other interests of acknowledged importance. There are no overriding planning reasons for preventing the applicants from improving the living environment of the household in the manner proposed. A grant of planning permission would be appropriate. The Council may impose necessary and reasonable conditions to ensure satisfactory initial development and satisfactory on-going use of the site.